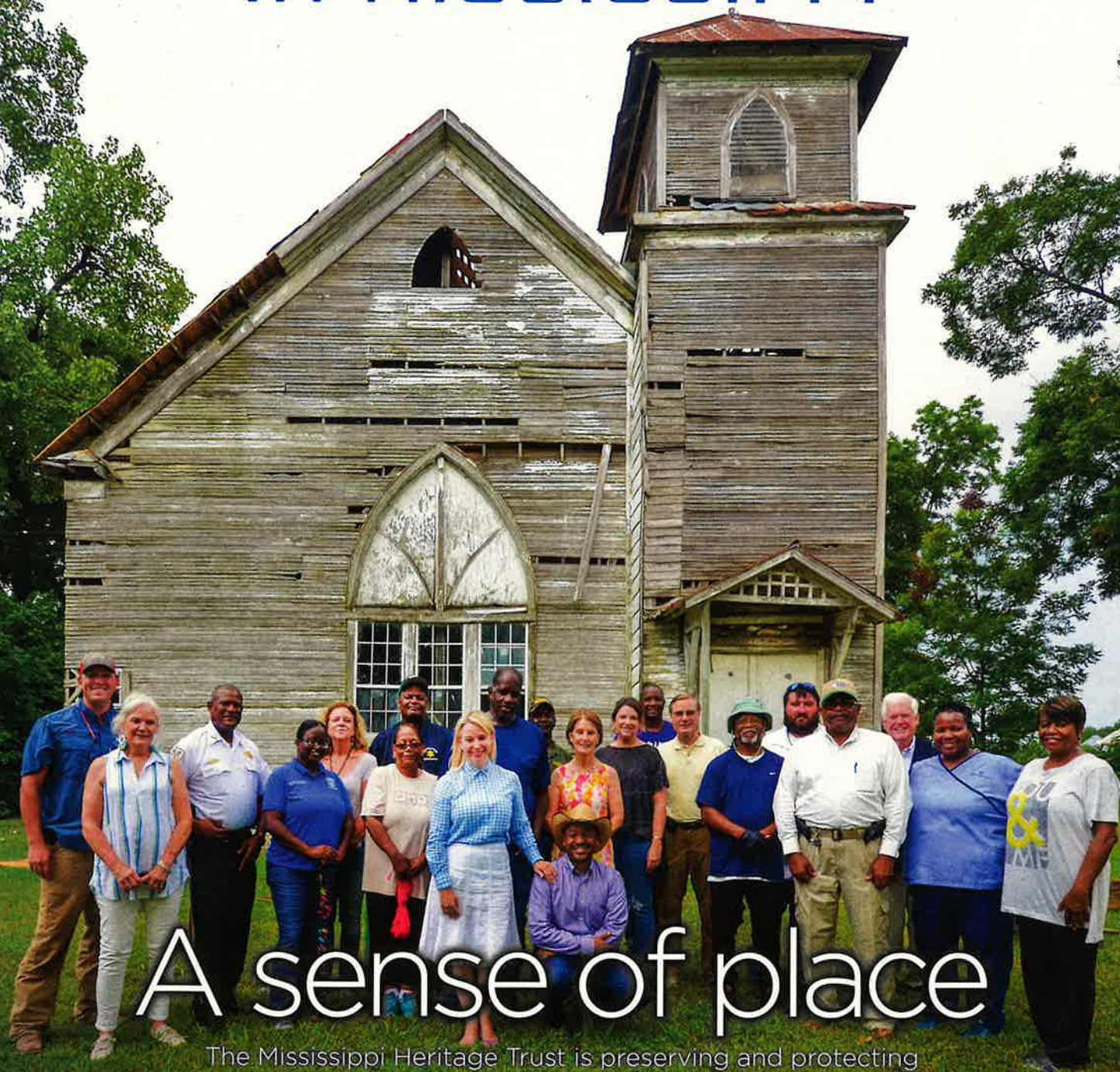


FOR MEMBERS OF PEARL RIVER VALLEY ELECTRIC POWER ASSOCIATION

TODAY IN MISSISSIPPI



A sense of place

The Mississippi Heritage Trust is preserving and protecting
cherished landmarks in communities across the state

Mississippi
State Fair

Happy Fall,
Y'all

Game Day
Goodies

OCTOBER 2019

Fertile ground

I love October. The weather is finally cooling off, it's football season, fall colors are settling into the landscape and ... it's National Cooperative Month.

All across rural Mississippi, from our coastal towns to the hill country, the Delta and every place in between, we are a part of co-op country. Truth is, it can be easy to forget just how different electric cooperatives really are from other energy companies.

We don't answer to outside investors who are only interested in using us as a way to make a buck, a key difference that has been part of the plan from the beginning. In fact, our state has been fertile ground for growing electric cooperatives — and that is something to celebrate during National Cooperative Month!

National Cooperative Month was established in 1964; and since then, countless advancements and technological innovations have helped pave the way for our industry's success. And if you live on our lines today, you're playing an important role in shaping our future as an energy company. As member-owners, you are helping us in our mission to effectively deliver affordable, reliable and safe energy. It is our commitment to continue to research and invest in more efficient technology and cleaner sources

of energy to ensure that tomorrow is even brighter for you, our members.

So sure, you may be used to getting your energy from us, but we love the energy we get from you. And because of that, rural Mississippi remains fertile ground for the electric cooperative way. Like you, it is also important to us that these seeds of progress are sewn and thrive. After all, in Mississippi co-op country, fertile ground is rooted deeply in both our heritage and our future.

I hope you enjoy all that this month of October brings you, including this edition of Today in Mississippi! There are highlights of some remarkable people, places and things to

do all across our great state, including the preservation work of the Mississippi Heritage Trust, the 160th Mississippi State Fair and the beautiful "Happy Fall, Y'all" Picture This photo spread.

Wishing you a happy fall and National Cooperative Month! 

“
All across rural Mississippi, from our coastal towns to the hill country, the Delta and every place in between, we are a part of co-op country.

Michael Callahan

Executive Vice President/CEO
Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi



Photo by Ruby Wilson, Columbus
4-County Electric Power Association member

Mississippi is ...

My Mississippi

*Making mud pies and building frog houses around our feet
Running barefoot through the woods
in the summertime heat
Camping out by the river on a Saturday night
Roasting hot dogs over a crackling fire with such delight
Relaxing on the porch amid the chirping of the birds
Waiting quietly for sunrise without any words
Walking and basking in the colors of fall
Thanking God for our blessings each one and all
Stargazing on a breathtakingly beautiful night
Feeling all in my world is well and right
Waking up to the rare winter wonderland dream
Scooping just enough snow to make homemade ice cream
I've traveled the world, and will continue to roam
But my heart skips a beat when
I'm back in Mississippi, my home*

Penny Watkins Wilkerson, Carthage
Central Electric Power Association member



October is
National Cooperative Month

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You can spend thousands for an expensive hearing aid, or you can spend just \$249 for a hearing aid that is great for most hearing losses (**only \$229 each when you buy a pair – hear up to 3 times better than wearing just one**). We are so sure you will love your hearing aids that we offer a **100% Money Back Guarantee - Risk Free** if you are not satisfied for any reason.

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Celebrating 160 years

the Mississippi State Fair

October 2-14

by Sandra M. Buckley

The Mississippi State Fair is turning 160 this year, and will be "the place to be" October 2-14 with a fun-filled lineup that attendees have historically come to look forward to each fall. "Mississippi is known as one of the longest running State Fairs in America," said Steve Hutton, executive director of the Mississippi Fair Commission.

The anticipated event takes place in downtown Jackson at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds, drawing 600,000 people from around Mississippi, the United States and world. "We have welcomed visitors from Australia, Japan and all parts of the world," noted Hutton, explaining that the event also makes a significant economic impact on the capital city area and state - at an estimated \$50 million - by boosting sales for hotels, restaurants and retailers.

For many people, the fair represents a longstanding family tradition; for others, it's the thrill of the carnival rides, cravings for fair food, headlining music performances, livestock shows, antique car show, arts and crafts, tractor pull, and much, much more.

The Midway - a 1.2-mile stretch of games, carnival rides and food - is always a fan favorite. From funnel cakes and fried pickles to corn dogs and fresh-baked biscuits, the options are almost endless. "Mississippi State Fair places a

great emphasis on our local talent, such as Penn's Fish House famous chicken-on-a-stick," said Hutton, adding that another local favorite is the Icee stand, also a Mississippi-based product. "And, everyone can't wait to get their fingers sticky with some good ole Malone's State Fair Taffy. My favorite, however, is the ribeye sandwich provided the Mississippi Cattleman's Association."

New this year is "the coolest event at the fair," known as the Ice Dome,



an 8,000-square-foot ice skating rink featured in the Mississippi Coliseum that is only \$10 for all day skating. "We think having the Coliseum open, having an air conditioned space for people to enjoy and having the ice rink is going to be the biggest new attraction at this year's fair," he said.

More newly added attractions include an Extreme Off-Road Exhibit and a "beautiful, double-decker merry-go-round that will be a site to behold," said Hutton. "Also, we are having a fun event to address a serious topic. We are hosting our first ever Ferris Wheel 5K Run

Against Traffick, bringing awareness and raising money to fight Human Trafficking."

A lineup of concerts is on tap as well, spanning a variety of musical genres. "Country music, rock, pop, R&B, blues, urban, gospel and bluegrass, something for everyone," Hutton shared. "We are also proud to announce a new second stage, which will have 30 performances, all brand new and all local."

The fair continues to be an annual destination for hundreds of thousands of people, and the reasons are numerous. One, however, is that it offers an affordable experience with general admission of only \$5 for adults and children under 6 are free. Fairgoers can easily get a big bang for their buck, with specials as well as a host of free activities such as the Kid Zone, Pig Races, Fetch-N-Fish, the Petting Zoo and The Great American Thrill Show.

As the Mississippi State Fair celebrates its 160th milestone year, it is definitely on point as "the place to be" yet again. There is something for everyone, including opportunities for creating new traditions with family and friends while also triggering a few cherished memories of fair days gone by. 

Visit www.msstatefair.com for more information.

The Tishomingo Swinging Bridge

by Sandra M. Buckley

Nestled in the scenic Appalachian foothills of Northeast Mississippi is Tishomingo State Park, which sprawls over 1,500 acres of land dotted with the natural beauty of lush greenery, massive rock formations, moss-covered boulders, wildflowers, — creeks and more.

One of the park's landmark attractions is the famed Tishomingo Swinging Bridge. At 200 feet long, the bridge crosses over Bear Creek and leads to a picturesque waterfall and substantial rock formation. "It is a beautiful, functioning, historical landmark," said André Hollis, director of park operations for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks.

Tishomingo State Park is steeped in history that dates back to 7000 B.C., when Paleo Indians settled on the land. Later, in the early 1800s, these rolling hills were home to the Chickasaw Tribe — which is now the namesake of the park and its county and city.

"I personally think Tishomingo State Park is the most scenic park in the state of Mississippi," Hollis added. "The massive rocks and early Indian history throughout the park are must-see attractions."

Situated along the Natchez Trace Parkway, Tishomingo State Park attracts thousands of tourists each year. In fiscal year 2019,

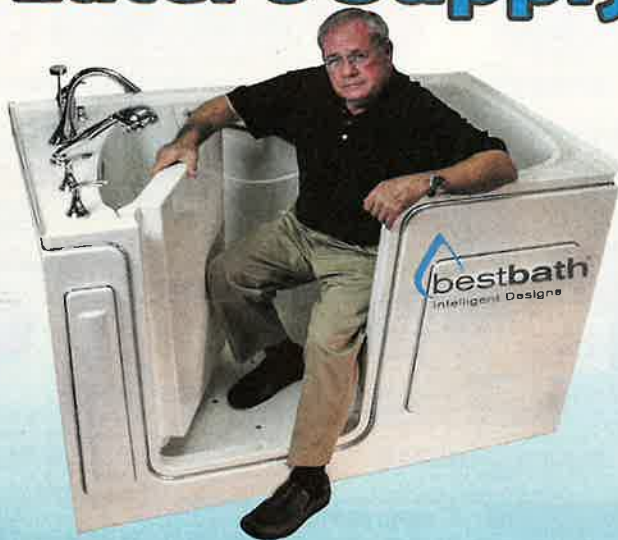


more than 77,380 people visited the park, with about 31,000 of those from out of state.

Visitors not only come to Tishomingo State Park to enjoy the swinging bridge experience, they also take part in canoeing, 13 miles of hiking trails, fishing, rock climbing, disc golf and exploring an 1840s log cabin, among other outdoor recreational activities. Plus, the park is equipped with cabins and RV campsites. 🌲

Visit www.mdwfp.com/parks-destinations/state-parks/tishomingo for more information.

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That glorious month of **October**

October was initially the eighth month. The early Roman calendar contained only 10 months. A revision of this early calendar, likely instigated by Julius Caesar, created one that included 12 months, January and February added. That left October, its root meaning eight like in octopus, out of place. Still, the name stuck. As a result of this jiggling around of days and months and years, the eighth month became the tenth month and remains that in the Gregorian system we implement today.

All those rather tedious facts aside, October is known for its autumn grandeur. True, autumn may officially begin with the autumnal equinox in September. There is, after all, that curious slant of shadows during September. But it is October that must be considered real autumn, particularly here in Mississippi. This is the time when conditions are ripe for the spectacles we associate with fall.

What are those spectacles? The list is long, and offering comment about each would fill a lengthy treatise. Still, effort will be made here to highlight some of the obvious and perhaps even a few that are more veiled but still present. First to consider is the color show.

Leaves will change colors in October. Depending upon weather conditions, these changes may be blatant or subtle. But they will be visible. Some could present in the form of hushed hues, with only a hint of what is to come. Others, already draped in brilliance, may practically attack. Those subtle ones could appear as little more than lush green losing its wealth, succumbing to tempered gold or quiet brown or gentle yellow, submissive in their journey toward enhanced glamour. Not unlike a makeup session preceding the party that ultimately

finds the made up wearing a soft amber gown trimmed in ferruginous lace.

And those in their new and complete wardrobes of effulgence will be simply breathtaking. They fairly glitter in their redness; orange too. When viewed from a hillside down into a hollow, they create the illusion of a patchwork quilt, a soft bed prepared for some occupant to come and rest, renew, thrill to the visual spectacle.

And there are more displays, soft-spoken most of them. That tenuous sheen of a placid lake festooned with poplars and tupelo gums and cypress. The distant drone of insects paying best regards to a passing day. Brownd and curled cornstalks executing the percussion part to a favorable-breeze symphony. A sand ditch, dry most likely, along a hardwood bottom.

All are available in abundance. All can be found in this eighth month, which became the tenth month but is nonetheless well named — October. 

**by Tony
Kinton**



Tony Kinton has been an active outdoors writer for 30 years. Visit www.tonykinton.com for more information.



Above: With its brightly colored leaves and blooms, the compact Lime Sizzler shrub is well suited for small landscapes and gardens. Left: Lime Sizzler produces whorled clusters of gorgeous reddish-orange blooms all summer and well into the fall. Photos by MSU Extension/ Gary Bachman.

season, as this removes and reduces the current season's flower development. Always prune in late winter before spring growth begins.

Lime Sizzler is an excellent choice for butterfly and hummingbird gardens, as the flowers provide an ample supply of sweet, nutritious nectar for our pollinators.

Lime sizzler is considered a tropical perennial and is hardy in USDA Zones 8 to 11. It is likely to be evergreen most years along the Mississippi coast and is considered root hardy for most of the rest of the state.

Look for Lime Sizzler at your favorite garden center for next year's summer garden. ✂

by **Dr. Gary Bachman**



Gary Bachman, Ph.D., Extension/Research Professor of Horticulture at the Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center in Biloxi. He is also host of "Southern Gardening" radio and TV programs.

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National Rural Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., for a week-long trip to experience democracy in action.

For the past seven years, Pearl River Valley Electric has offered scholarships to members and their immediate families to attend any Mississippi community college through the Round Up for Education program. Supported by members who round up the bills to the nearest dollar each month, the program has provided financial assistance to nearly 1,500 students to date. This is truly a wonderful reflection of the strength and spirit of the cooperative business model.

Ultimately, the overall community benefits from these programs because of the support and participation of you and your neighbors. We hope that you will think of Pearl River Valley Electric as more than an energy provider, but rather as a local business that powers economic development and prosperity for the members we serve.

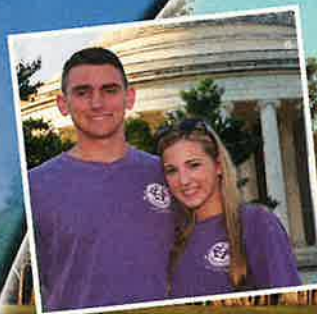
As we celebrate National Cooperative Month, we want to thank you for being a member of Pearl River Valley Electric. We want you to continue to stay involved as we build a better future together. The cooperative business model is a time-tested philosophy that contributes to an improved quality of life for all of us.

Pearl River Valley Electric: FAST FACTS

- Organized in **May 1938**
- Governing body is a **10-member Board of Directors** elected by members for staggered 3-year terms
- Service area includes all or parts of **12 counties**
- Serves more than **50,000 meters** consisting of residential, commercial, large power and industrial loads
- Electric distribution system includes more than **6,100 miles of power lines and 25 substations**
- Headquarters is located in **Columbia**, with district offices in **Hattiesburg, Wiggins and Purvis**
- Employs approximately **130** highly skilled, service-oriented professionals
- In **1963**, PRVEPA was the first cooperative in Mississippi to begin paying patronage refunds (a return on members' equity in the Association) ... since that time, more than **\$48 million** has been returned to members over the course of **55 years**
- In **1998**, PRVEPA began returning patronage credits to the estates of deceased members ... more than **\$13 million** has been returned through that program



YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM 2020



If you're an 11th grader served by Pearl River Valley Electric Power Association, make this year memorable by participating in the 2020 Leadership Workshop in Jackson, Miss., and Youth Tour of Washington, D.C



Essay deadline October 31.
Visit www.prvepa.com for more information.

A little piece of history in a **BOTTLE**

by Brad Barr

What's the best way to immerse yourself in history?

Find a little piece of it, according to Earl McIlwain of Oktibbeha County. Earl has done his part to uncover a little bottled-up piece of history, excavating a collection of bottles that dates to the 1800s.

The 87-year-old retired 4-County Electric Power Association meter reader has always enjoyed collecting historical items. He started with stamps, collected coins and then switched to bottles. In his travels, Earl would sometimes come across old, abandoned houses and property. After gaining permission from the owners, he would look around and, more often than not, find hidden treasures. "I found some fabulous stuff through the years," he said. Bottles of all shapes, sizes and colors. His collection, at times, has numbered in the thousands.

The history hunter even joined a group of archaeologists from Mississippi State University, traveling around the state exploring abandoned dumping sites. The result? Stone jugs, stone bottles, medicine bottles and a bevy of soda bottles. "I'm fascinated with history," he said.

A self-admitted jack of all trades, Earl made a little history of his own in his 43-year association (1966 to 2009) with 4-County. "I really enjoyed it," he said. Through the years as a meter reader, Earl was often asked his name by children. "I'm Earl the Squirrel," he replied, drawing giggles from his young audience. The name stuck. "Years later, this tall fellow with a big grin came up to me at Wal-Mart. He wanted to know if I was Earl the Squirrel. He was one of the kids I saw on my routes. That was kind of neat."

As a child, Earl grew up working 30 acres of cotton and corn on the family farm. Hard work was a way of life in those days. At five years old, Earl begged his father for a tricycle. "He told



“

I tell people all the time that it'd be nice to go back to the old days when we could leave the door open. We didn't have much, but we were happy.

Earl McIlwain

me that if I picked a bale of cotton, he'd get one for me. I started at sunup and worked until sundown. I picked my bale of cotton and he got my tricycle."

His father, a farmer and carpenter, turned over the farming and responsibility to a 15-year-old Earl. "It was a full-time job," he said, adding that he was still going to Maben High School. He also drove a school bus his senior year.

"I tell people all the time that it'd be nice to go back to the old days when we could leave the door open. We didn't have much, but we were happy," he said.

After high school, Earl served in the Navy and was stationed in California. He later worked in the San Diego area as a plant

nursery supervisor for eight years.

California was nice, Earl said, but it wasn't home. He returned to Mississippi, settling in Oktibbeha County and went to work for I.G. "Big" Daniels at 4-County Electric Power Association.

He also worked closely with early 4-County pioneers Louis Wise and Chloe Miller.

Today, Earl and his wife of 41 years, Juanita, live on 60 acres of family land in the Self Creek area of Oktibbeha County. His wife is a collector, too, keeping an eye out for antique glass and china bells. The couple are members of First Baptist Church of Mathiston. Earl has four children, nine grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren.

Earl said he stays away from doctors (other than an annual checkup at the VA Center) and doesn't take any medicine.

"I do what I want to do," Earl said with a twinkle in his eyes. "I just have to do it a little slower than I used to."

Collecting can be a fun and rewarding hobby, Earl said. "I've made a lot of friends through this hobby. I've learned a lot about history. And, most importantly, I've had a lot of fun." ❁



A work in progress to become a destination for FUN!



by Sandra M. Buckley

Arlie may be in a wheelchair, but she wants to ride a horse. Allie may be blind, but she wants to “fly” on the zip line. Nick may not talk to you, but he loves to play basketball. Victoria may not always understand what you’re saying, but she loves to dance. Zylan may have trouble holding a pencil, but watch out if he’s holding a water gun.

Arlie, Allie, Nick, Victoria and Zylan are real kids who enjoy the same fun things all children do—but they just need a little extra help. And that extra help is what Camp Kamassa plans to provide for Mississippi children and adults with serious illnesses and physical, mental and emotional challenges.

Onsite in Crystal Springs, Camp Kamassa’s construction is well underway transforming 326 acres into a wheelchair-accessible, year-round camp destination for those with special needs — and its progress is on track for a grand opening in the fall of 2021.

Assisting with the construction efforts are Air Force Reservists through a program called Innovation Readiness Training. The program, which is a part of the Department of Defense, matches soldiers training for deployment with communities who need assistance.

Thanks to this invaluable military part-



nership, numerous strides have been made — even Arlie, age 3, noticed and told her mom, “Look! The pirates are building me a castle.” Those “pirates” are U.S. soldiers, and the “castle” is a cabin. To date, eight of the camp’s cabins have been built and pads are currently being prepared for six designated family cabins.

In addition, concrete has been poured for the 8,000-square-foot multipurpose building. This space will include a rock-climbing wall, craft room for ceramic and woodworking, teaching kitchen, library, dress-up room, music room, large accommodations for dances and movies, and more.

Soon to be constructed is a fully outfitted kitchen and a specially designed infirmary, which will be connected to each other. Doctors and other experts from Batson Children’s Hospital are assisting with the design of the infirmary, as it will be particularly important to the healthcare of camp attendees.

In less than two years, Camp Kamassa in Copiah County will be in full operation and a special place where Mississippians facing serious health and medical challenges will be able to discover and experience the carefree joys of simply being a kid. From horseback riding, playing basketball and swimming to dancing and “flying” on a zip line, this will be a destination for fun. ✨

HOW TO HELP

Camp Kamassa is a project by Mississippi’s Toughest Kids Foundation and supported by Southwest Electric. It relies on financial contributions and fundraisers to assist with necessities such as building materials, furnishings, plumbing, wiring and landscaping. Visit www.mtkfound.com or call 601-892-1117 for more information. Donations are tax deductible, and checks can be mailed to:

MTK Foundation
P.O. Box 520
Crystal Springs, MS 39059
www.mtkfound.com



9. Luke, the "happy" Irish Setter, by **Melanie Fuelling** of Meridian; East Mississippi EPA member.

10. Blue jay at Piney Grove Campground in Tishomingo County, by **Marlene Langford** of Maben; 4-County EPA member.

11. Parker and Zoey, by parents **Vicky and Floyd Sanderson** of Preston; East Mississippi EPA members.

12. Hot air balloon fun at the Jackson County Fair, by **Debbie Scott** of Pascagoula; Singing River Electric member.

13. Jordyn in the pumpkin patch, by grandmother **Connie Richardson** of Magnolia; Magnolia Electric Power member.

14. A deer and hunter, by grandparents **Nena and Ray Smith** of Ellisville; Dixie Electric members.



Clockwise from top left: Listed as endangered in 2003, the old Hattiesburg High School is getting a new lease on life as apartments for senior citizens. Students from Reeves Elementary School in Long Beach show off their historic preservation artwork depicting endangered places in Mississippi. The Isaiah T. Montgomery House, a National Historic Landmark in Mound Bayou, was listed as one of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in 2018. The Millsaps Hotel in Hazlehurst, listed as endangered in 2013, is undergoing remarkable transformation into a community arts center.

places across the state. And a highlight of the 20th anniversary event is a photography exhibition featuring images from places named on past lists.

“

The architectural legacy of each community is a blend of emotional ties and personal ties that create the connection we have to a special place in our lives. The Mississippi Heritage Trust exists to support communities in their efforts to save the historical buildings that are so tightly woven in the fabric of these connections.

Lolly Rash, executive director, Mississippi Heritage Trust

“After the list is announced, the real work begins,” Rash shared. “Some places from past lists have been saved, some have been lost and some are still in the works. Sadly, some of

the sites are in an active plan to be demolished and may be gone even before the list is announced. We continue to advocate for each place, and provide a venue where people can talk about the impact of losses and the impact of saving the sites and what can happen in a community when either of these outcomes is achieved.”

Nominations for the Top 10 Most Endangered Places list are received from residents within the communities. The Mississippi Heritage Trust organizes a group of preservationists to discuss the threats to the location, as well as the importance of the location on both a local and national scale. As with all progress in any form, a local champion is needed to identify and rally for any particular building.

“We hope people will look at the list and think about an opportunity in their own communities,” Rash said. “Regardless of the outcome, we hope a real dialogue can begin within a community and we can work with them to find a good solution, to set goals for an agreed upon outcome and to unite a community to be successful for this or other issues in the future.”

Visit www.mississippiheritage.com or www.10mostms.com for more information.

WIN THE PARTY ON GAME DAY



Skip the takeout and pre-packaged snacks this game day. Our quick and easy recipes and game day food tips will make your party the one folks will still be raving about on Monday morning!

by Marianna and Andy Chapman

Food and football go together like peanut butter and jelly. But food, that's the lasting memory maker — and no one does passionate, flavorful food better than us here in the Deep South. Don't leave the competition to the football team: make your tailgate the one folks can't wait to attend — and can't stop talking about long after the post-game wrap-ups are done.

Two of our favorite game day recipes both featuring Simmons Catfish strips, with small, 1 to 1.5-ounce, portions being perfect for tailgating bites. Simmons Catfish is a delicious, healthy, sustainable protein grown and processed by three generations of the Simmons' family in Yazoo City, and we love the versatility this product provides for a variety of occasions — especially game day hospitality!

With this easy to follow gameplan and recipes, you'll be all set to connect with your friends and family on game day without a lot of fuss. Cheers to winning the party, y'all!

GAMEPLAN

1. Pre-Game: Offer a signature beverage to your guests. Whether it's your famous lemonade sweet tea or a game day punch or even a favorite bottled water or soda adorned with a game day sticker, quench their thirst with something memorable! The details make the memories.

2. Offense: When you dip I dip. It wouldn't be a Southern party of any sort without a dip. Our favorite game day option is Simmons Catfish Dip, which is easy to prepare in advance and is hearty enough to satisfy your hungriest guest. Honestly, we get in trouble whenever we do not serve this dip. It's simply one of the most

popular, crowd-pleasing recipes we've ever developed. But don't take our word for it — try it for yourself! Add an extra shot of hot sauce to this dip to warm things up as the weather cools.

3. Defense: Lay it on thick. Grilling and game day are longtime companions. An easy finger food on game day are our Grilled Simmons Catfish Strips basted with Sugar Taylor Sauce. This easy, two ingredient combo is always a winner served hot off the grill or at room temperature.

4. Special Teams: Fire up secret weapons. Your packing, unpacking and setup will be so much easier if

you stick to a short shopping list and force each ingredient to do double duty. Use a few ingredients that each pack big flavor for the maximum win. For example, use Sugar Taylor Sauce as a baste for the Grilled Simmons Catfish Strips and also as a dip for the strips and a bowl full of pretzels.



When you tailgate this football season, remember the most important tip is to have fun and connect. Our relationships matter above all else, so use this grand tradition of tailgating to make memories with people that matter most to you.

Grilled Catfish Strips



Ingredients

Catfish filet strips
Sugar Taylor Sauce

This is a great option for grilling on small portable grills. Preheat grill to medium hot heat (approximately 350 degrees). Toss catfish strips in Sugar Taylor Sauce in a bowl until all are just coated. Use tongs to place strips on grill. Baste more Sugar Taylor Sauce onto the strips while grilling. Strips will cook in only a few short minutes, so take care not to dry them out.

Serve with a side of Sugar Taylor Sauce for additional dipping sauce. 🌿

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Gulfport residents Marianna and Andy Chapman own and operate Eat Y'all, a company on a mission to save family farms by equipping producers to serve foodservice accounts and empowering chefs to use their purchasing power today to ensure the availability of healthy, high quality ingredients tomorrow. Visit www.EatYall.com for more information.

Eat Y'all



■ Submission guidelines

- Photos must be in sharp focus.
- Photos must be the original work of an amateur photographer (of any age).
- Photos may be either color or black and white, print or digital.
- Digital photos must be high-resolution JPG files of at least 1 MB in size. If emailing a phone photo, select "actual size" before sending. We cannot use compressed photo files.
- Please do not use photo-editing software to adjust colors or tones. We prefer to do it ourselves, if necessary, according to our production standards.
- Photos with the date stamped on the image cannot be used.
- Each entry must be accompanied by the photographer's name, address, phone number and electric power association (if applicable). Include the name(s) of any recognizable people or places in the picture. Feel free to add any other details you like.
- Prints will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. We cannot, however, guarantee their safe return through the mail.

■ How to submit photos

Attach digital photos to your email message and send to news@ecm.coop.

If submitting more than one photo, please attach all photos to only one email message, if possible. Please be sure to include all information requested in the guidelines.

Or, mail prints or a CD to Picture This, Today in Mississippi, P.O. Box 3300, Ridgeland, MS 39158-3300.

Photographers whose photos are published are entered in a random drawing for a \$200 cash prize to be awarded in December 2019.

Questions? Contact Today in Mississippi at 601-605-8600 or news@ecm.coop.

Photos must be emailed or postmarked by December 6. Selected photos will appear in the January issue.

We salute the more than 2,900 dedicated men and women who join forces and work tirelessly to keep Mississippi energized with reliable and affordable electric service.

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

...helping others in time of need

As part of the national cooperative family, Mississippians are ready to step up to serve on the front lines during emergency operations.

Electric power restoration leads the way to recovery from a natural disaster. Safety tops the lists of reasons why we act quickly and decisively in such emergencies; downed power lines must be cleared to allow safe passage through affected areas.

Thousands of miles of power lines must be rebuilt as soon as weather conditions allow. Electricity is crucial for all phases of disaster relief work, including security and law enforcement, sanitation and water supply, communications, shelter operations, traffic control and so on.

Each distribution cooperative is a locally owned utility. But all 26 Mississippi cooperatives work together to achieve mutual goals—emergency power restoration being one of the most important.

What's more, ECM is part of a multi-state network of electric cooperatives that meet each year to discuss ways to improve their emergency response plans and coordination. This mutual-aid network provides the contacts and means for a fast, coordinated team response uniting electric cooperatives throughout the region after major disasters.

We in Mississippi have often been on the receiving end of this aid. Time and again out-of-state cooperative crews have helped us rebuild lines destroyed by hurricanes, tornadoes, ice storms and floods. In fact, we are very good at disaster recovery because we've had so much experience doing it!

Mississippians' first reaction upon seeing any community suffer is to reach out with donations of goods, money and services. It's not because we may get something in return. It's simply because helping others is the right thing to do.

 grin 'n' bare it

Thankful that fall is finally here

As I sit at my computer on this beautiful October day morning, I whisper a little prayer of thanks that another fall is finally here. Every year, the "Blah Period" seems to be harder for my man to get through. Not all of you ladies understand what I am talking about, but many of you experience this period of time in one form or another. If you are still puzzled regarding these statements, then I need to explain. The time that I am speaking of, encompasses a minimum of two months, July and August, but in most cases three months that includes June. This depends on whether your college baseball team makes it to, and past, the regional tournaments.

For my readers who still don't understand what I am talking about, I will describe Mr. Roy's college athletic interests, which also match that of a lot of Mississippi husbands. He can hardly wait for college football season to start on the Saturday before Labor Day. From then until the season ends, which depends on how successful the season was and a possible bowl game, Mr. Roy lives and breathes college football. When football is finally over in January, basketball is heating up, then it's not just Saturday afternoons but week nights also. And here again, if it's a successful season, tournaments can extend the season until mid March or later. When spring comes, you guessed it, baseball. College baseball teams in Mississippi are normally pretty good, so interest is always high.

But when the last college baseball game for Mr. Roy's team is finally over, my man goes into a mood of depression. I pet him, discuss some of his favorite games from previous seasons and find reruns of games on YouTube for him to watch. I'll do anything to keep him focused on Labor Day weekend when his mood becomes jubilant. For more than 30 years we attended college games for all three sports, including girls basketball. After we stopped purchasing season tickets, I wondered if his interest in his college team's games would wane. But if anything, it has

increased. Now with so much television, he can watch almost all games sitting in his special TV room and chair. Now, don't misunderstand, Mr. Roy is not a "couch potato." In fact, about the only thing that will get him in the house during daylight hours is a college sports event.

This year when the last week in August began, I could see that special glimmer in his eyes, and that sweet little grin was back. I visited the grocery and stocked up on his special snacks and planned my Saturday around his football game schedule for the day, so I could watch with him. He reviewed his schedule with me several times and finally printed a copy so I wouldn't be late for any event. ESPN "Game Day" begins on Saturday at 8 a.m., and if you can endure three hours of that before the first game starts, you are really a football fan. Most Southern men, "bless their hearts," love hunting, fishing, pickup trucks and college football. And I'm thankful to be married to one. And for you girls that say you don't like football and can't stand this time of the year, I've got some advice for you. Get interested in this part of your husband's life. After a few weeks or months you might decide you enjoy it, and it's an excellent way to increase the bond with your man.

At 10:30 p.m. this past Saturday, when the last game on Mr. Roy's schedule ended, he said, "It's time to go to bed, I'm worn out." I almost asked if he was pleased with the way his college team played today, but at that hour I decided it was best to leave that question until later. It was too late to listen to his replay of the game. But bless his heart, I know that his assessment would end with, "It's their first game of the year and they'll get better." Besides, there is always basketball and baseball. 

by Kay
Grafe



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The funniest thing came on television the other day. It was a story about the newfound popularity of ditching the baby stroller and just strapping your youngster onto your chest or your back and carrying them papoose style. They showed moms and dads doing all sorts of things wrapped and strapped to their toddlers — jogging, yard work, shopping. I guess the oddest was a young mom who latched her child onto her back and then did her favorite exercise — poll dancing! I howled and turned to Miz Jo and asked if she could imagine my mom poll dancing.

Bob Dylan tried to tell us years ago that, “The times they are a-changin’.” Well, guess what. They have changed. Picture your grandmother (or great-grandmother or whoever in the 1960s) using Facebook. My grandmother always seemed like a frail, elderly woman to me. Imagining her paying bills online is completely foreign. But I don’t sell her short. Her recipe for fried chicken started with, “Catch a chicken.”

I think about the old days and the old ways a lot this time of year. I suppose it’s because fall and winter are when we had our gatherings at grandmother’s house in Fulton. Most Thanksgivings or Christmases we would descend on the old home place.

Grandmother still heated with coal and cooked with wood. There is no better alarm clock than the smell of coffee,

bacon and wood smoke drifting under the covers and finding your nose deep in the feather mattress.

My kids don’t have those kinds of memories — of a time when life was dictated by the calendar as much as by the clock. My grandparents lived that way — planting and harvest, church on Sunday, celebrating holidays and always looking forward to something else.

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There is no better alarm clock than the smell of coffee, bacon and wood smoke drifting under the covers and finding your nose deep in the feather mattress.

Don’t get me wrong. I am a fan of modern times and technology. I wouldn’t trade my computer for a typewriter under any circumstances. Spell check alone is worth its weight in gold, although sometimes my goofs still slip through and get me a bunch of emails.

But one thing I would like to retrieve

from the old times is time — or enough of it. Grandma had swings and rocking chairs on her porch and time to go sit in them. And they really did have enough time to finish stuff so they could go sit. I don’t seem to be able to get anything done. Too busy! That reminds me of the Yogi Berra story of why no one went to a particular restaurant anymore — because it was too crowded.

Speaking of time, we get our hour back the end of this month — the one we donated to “savings time” last spring. Knowing already it will probably evaporate into the vapor of life as soon as it arrives, I really want to try to use it wisely this year. If nothing else, relax on the porch swing for an hour later that Sunday. 🍂

by Walt Grayson



Walt Grayson is the host of “Mississippi Roads” on Mississippi Public Broadcasting television and the author of two “Looking Around Mississippi” books and “Oh! That Reminds Me: More Mississippi Homegrown Stories.” Contact him at walt@waltgrayson.com.